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May 14, 2012

Lisa Jackson, Administrator  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20460

Dear Administrator Jackson,

I am writing to you in support of your decision to conduct a Watershed Assessment for Bristol Bay, Alaska. I have heard from citizens in North Carolina who are concerned about the dangers posed by the proposed Pebble Mine, which would be built at Bristol Bay's headwaters. These hunters and anglers, sportsmen organizations and small businesses recognize the need to protect one of our nation's best hunting and sport fishing destinations. I share their perspective.

As you know, Bristol Bay is an important economic driver for the state of Alaska and the Pacific Northwest. It creates over 12,000 jobs and produces over \$500 million in revenue annually. Sport fishing in Bristol Bay alone generates \$60 million each year and sustains more than 800 full-time and part-time jobs. It also helps to support an outdoor industry that employs guides, outfitters and manufacturers from around the country.

As somebody who grew up hunting and fishing, I appreciate our nation's long sportsmen tradition and I support efforts to protect public lands for use by future generations. I am particularly pleased when conserving America's best habitats has the added benefit of saving American jobs.

When evaluating the potential risk that large scale development could have on a fishery as important as Bristol Bay, it is essential to gather and evaluate the best available science before making a decision. The Watershed Assessment your agency is undertaking is essential to that process. Should this scientific review determine that pollution from a large scale mine would have unacceptable impacts on water quality and fish stocks, I would support efforts by the EPA to protect Bristol Bay.

Sincerely,

Heath Shuler  
Member of Congress

CC: Dennis McLerran, EPA Region 10 Administrator